

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 February 27, 2007

Attendance

Rev. Reuben Akinfime (A)
David Alexander
Joyce Anderson
Josephine Blakeley (E)
Patricia Boone (A)
James A. Bowens
Esther Cobb (A)
Adrainer Kim Coleman
Gregory Coad (A)
Bonnie Crump (A)
Essie Duggan
Sam Gardner (A)
Shirley Gonsalves (E)
Daniel Goodine (A)
Sarah Hall
Henry Hill
Kofi Hormeku
Michael Howard (E)
Hattie Hunt
Allene Ingram
Daisy Jackson
Wordell Johnson
Dr. Cade Jones, III (E)
Eula Key
Danny King (A)
Bettie Kollock-Wallace (E)

Shawn Lewis (A)
Deborah Mack
James Mack (A)
Rev. Thelma Martin (E)
Yolanda Matthews
Sadie McNamara (E)
Rev. Joseph Norton (A)
Marie Pierre
Elder Devon Ponds (E)
Mattie Pusey (A)
Isaiah Simmons (E)
Ernestine Turner
Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Marcus Victory
Alice Vines
Annie Walkes
Dr. Merrill White
Herman Winston
Hazel Younger
Viola D. Greene-Walker, DM
E. Jane Coleman-Assistant ADM
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Tony Forman for Hon. Ed Towns
Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Ms. Cynthia David for Hon. Eric Adams
Theresa Harley for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Hon. Lisa Kenner

MEETING HELD AT BROWNSVILLE MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, 444 THOMAS S. BOYLAND STREET, BROOKLYN

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairperson Hazel Younger officially called the Public Hearing to order at 7:13 p.m.. An invocation was said by Ms. Hazel Clark.

IN THE MATTER OF the Citywide Statement of Needs for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009 on facilities that the City expects to site, replace, expand or reduce during the next two fiscal years (A copy of the Citywide Statement of Needs is available for review at the Office of Community Board #16).

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that even though Community District #16 was not sited for any of the proposals, she extracted those that could possibly be sited in our community, based upon the criteria of the proposals and what has historically been sited within Community District #16. The purpose of tonight s Public Hearing is to seek public comment.

Chairperson Younger asked if there were any comments or concerns with regards to the Citywide Statement of Needs? There being no comments, the next item was read.

IN THE MATTER OF the City s Preliminary Budget Statement and Community District Register for Fiscal Year 2008. The Hearing is to obtain public comments on City agencies r'sponses on the Capital and Expense Budget Priorities for Fiscal Year 2008 (A copy is available for review at the Office of Community Board #16).

Chairperson Younger asked if there were any comments or concerns about the Preliminary Budget Statement and Community District Register? There being no comments, a motion was made by Ms. Deborah Mack, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to adjourn the Public Hearing.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

A motion was made by Ms. Sarah Hall, seconded by Ms. Allene Ingram and carried to dispense with the reading of the minutes.

A motion was made by Rev. Miran Ukaegbu, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku and carried to dispense with the reading of the District Manager's report.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Marilyn Moseley from the Office of New York City Comptroller William C. Thompson, Jr..

Ms. Moseley stated that she is the Senior Policy Advisor for Comptroller Thompson. She is not a stranger to the District, having served as the Director of Community Boards for nearly twenty years under the leadership of former Borough President Howard Golden. She has worked with both District Manager Greene-Walker and Chairperson Younger and many others in the audience on a variety of projects affecting this community. She is here tonight to speak about a matter of great importance to this community.

In June 2003, Comptroller Thompson, in conjunction with a Citywide Taskforce on Teenage Pregnancy, conducted a study to determine the number of teen mothers who were still of the age where education was compulsory. That study found that there were over twenty thousand such mothers throughout the five boroughs of New York. The study also found that the Department of Education did not know nor seemed concerned that there were so many young mothers of school age. In fact, when the Department of Education was asked for their statistics on that population, they only showed 151 girls.

It is important to us as a society to encourage our young people to stay in school, and not to become parents until they are old enough to care for children responsibly. Statistics show that when teens become parents their economic earning potential is cut in half.

The study was so important that many organizations have requested that it be continued. The Comptroller, in collaboration with Fordham University, would like to come to this neighborhood and work with the community, the Community Board, local elected officials, and community activists in an effort to identify some of the young mothers who were school age three and four years ago and determine how they are faring today. Have they been able to move on in life? Were they ever encouraged to continue their formal education?

The purpose of the study is to enable the young people to stay in school. Even if they become pregnant, they are entitled, under the law, to return to school. We know that if they stay in school they are more likely to have successful and productive lives.

The project leaders will first seek to form an advisory board consisting of community members who will advise them on where they might find the young people who they need to make the project a success. Additionally, they will be interviewing the young people who are now eighteen and nineteen year olds and no longer school age. Part of the process will pay them a stipend for taking part in the interviews. The data will be systematically collected and the findings presented to the Department of Education (DOE), this community, and the young people that are affected because they dropped-out of school.

Mr. David Alexander asked what age group will the study target?

Ms. Moseley stated that the age group will be the young people who are now eighteen and nineteen years old and dropped-out out of school. The questions they are seeking to answer by locating the affected children are: Were they pushed out of school? Were they discouraged about going to school by the system itself?

Someone asked how will the young people be located?

Ms. Moseley stated that they will seek the assistance of this audience, houses of worship, and just about any resource available to them. She believes that once the young people find out about the project they will want to come forward and have their voices heard.

Rev. Miran Ukaegbu asked what is the objective of the study and how will it benefit this community?

Ms. Moseley stated that this will be a pilot program. The information gathered will be shared

with DOE so that they may implement programs to prevent the loss of proper education for young mothers. The law requires that children receive education up to a certain age, but when girls become pregnant, oftentimes, the schools neglect them. The purpose of this program will be to let the Chancellor, the Chancellor's staff, and DOE know that this is not acceptable.

Rev. Ukaegbu asked why was Brownsville chosen for the pilot program and will there be a fiscal benefit to the community?

Ms. Moseley stated that Brownsville was chosen because it has a great deal of young people who are affected by teen pregnancy.

Ms. Rebecca Gregory asked are there currently, or will there be programs that will allow the teen mothers the ability to care for their infants while they attend school?

Ms. Moseley stated that the intention is to force DOE to create and maintain programs that enable the children to learn. They are paid everyday to do this, but it's not being done.

Ms. Gregory stated that some of the teens are embarrassed by their pregnancy and go into hiding. How will the project reach these teens?

Ms. Moseley stated that the task force will include advocates who deal with teens in that predicament on a regular basis. The advocates will offer their knowledge in outreaching to the teens. There are many programs and schools for pregnant girls that are underutilized. Some of the girls know what is available to them and some do not. We need to find ways to get more young mothers to utilize them and get an education.

Mr. Burchell Marcus of Community Development of Block Associations asked when will the study begin?

Ms. Moseley stated that the date has not been established. Fordham University, the co-sponsor of the project, is in the process of securing funding.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku asked what kind of input will the parents of the teens have in the project?

Ms. Moseley stated that while they have a general idea of what direction the project should follow, they do not intend to dictate how it is implemented. The purpose of the advisory board (which she imagines will consist of some members of this audience, parents, community-based organizations, and others in the community) will be to obtain and offer suggestions. You know your community best.

Mr. James Bowens stated that we know what the problems are, let us be sure that this is a positive thing. That it brings about ways that the teens receive an education and skills to obtain work and not exploit them because they are young mothers.

Someone asked if the project was being funded by the City?

Ms. Moseley stated that it will be funded through grants that are being obtained by Fordham; no City funds will be involved.

Ms. Deborah Mack stated that theoretically, it sounds like a good project and perhaps the community input will be the thing that makes the difference. How will the Comptroller solicit for the advisory board?

Ms. Moseley stated that they will remain in contact with the community throughout the process.

She referred the audience to a host of publications that are available on tonight's distribution table featuring some of the different programs that the Comptroller is working on.

Ms. Essie Duggan, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee reported that the Committee met on Thursday, February 22, 2007 and discussed the goals and objectives of the Committee.

They also met with representatives from the Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project (NEDAP) about a problem that has been taking on epidemic proportions throughout New York City, particularly in low and moderate income neighborhoods of color, known as predatory mortgage lending. These mortgages are more expensive than others and in many instances were unaffordable at the time that they were made.

NEDAP is seeing an almost direct correlation between the foreclosure patterns and the high-cost to refinance loans made in neighborhoods of color. Some of the most common predatory lending practices and scams that they are seeing in neighborhoods of color are referred to as High Cost or Sub Prime Mortgages, Property Flipping or One Stop Shop, and Deed Theft.

These practices target underserved communities and individuals for abusive and overpriced loans. They include charging bogus fees and interest rates, and encouraging borrowers to repeatedly refinance their mortgages and pay new fees each time.

NEDAP will be invited to attend a Board meeting to give a presentation.

A motion was made by Ms. Deborah Mack, seconded by Ms. Allene Ingram and carried to accept the report of the Economic Development Committee.

Ms. Alice Vines, member of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, February 13, 2007 with representatives from the Federation of Multicultural Programs, Inc.. They are seeking support for their proposal to house their Administrative offices and develop 56 apartments for the elderly consisting of 43 one-bedroom units, 13 two-bedroom units and a total of 4,440 square feet of community facility space on Block 3589, Lots 1, 6-10 and 48-50. The balance of the proposed 16,560 square feet of community facility space would be provided in a separate building accessible from Chester Street.

They presently provide service to persons under the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities at multiple locations within the District. However, the proposed building is for apartments for the elderly, some of which would be designated for their current population.

The Committee recommends that the Board approve this proposal.

The Committee also met with representatives from Urban Strategies, Inc. which is seeking support for their proposal to develop 46 units of permanent affordable housing for low income families on Mother Gaston Boulevard bounded by Glenmore and Christopher Avenues, consisting of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units. This proposal would incorporate an after school youth program, tutorial program, and possibly a program for seniors.

The Committee recommends that the Board approve this proposal.

The Committee heard a presentation from representatives of AM&G Waterproofing LLC about their certified ULURP application to change the zoning at the southeast corner of Atlantic and Saratoga Avenues (273-281 Saratoga Avenue, Block 1433, Lots 35 and 36) from the existing R6 zoning to a M1-1 zoning, and the sale of City-owned lots 3 and 5 on Block 1433 to Erma Realty. This Change would allow for approximately 13,360 square feet of commercial/light-industrial use to facilitate a building to house their vehicles and maintenance shop, accessory office and storage space.

A public hearing and a vote on the request will be scheduled for the March meeting.

The Committee also met with representatives from the TNS Development Ltd. who informed the Committee that in the most recent round of Housing Preservation and Development's New Foundations program, they were awarded 2 clusters on Pacific and Dean Streets and Eastern Parkway containing 19 lots (Block 1435, Lots 43, 50, 53, 63, 64, 66, 68, 69, 72-77, Block 1442, Lots 61, 63, and Block 1449, Lots 12, 13) to construct 22 three family homes.

The next Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, March 13, 2007, at 5:30 p.m..

District Leader Lisa Kenner stated that a building on Rockaway Avenue near Livonia Avenue was supposed to be for elderly people and was changed once the building was built. She understands that people with HIV are living in the building.

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that on the block bounded by Rockaway Avenue, Livonia Avenue, Chester Street, and Riverdale Avenue are four different projects. The one heard last month is for low-income persons. Adjacent to that site, which is now open, is a facility that provides permanent housing for people living with HIV and AIDS. In the rear of the site, on the Chester Street side is another housing development sponsored by Little Rock Baptist Church which will be supportive housing for persons who have mental illnesses. This will also be permanent housing.

District Leader Kenner stated that she's been at the meetings and never heard that persons with HIV would be living in the building. She has nothing against them.

District Manager Greene-Walker invited Ms. Kenner to come into the office and view a copy of the minutes of the public meeting where the proposal was discussed.

Chairperson Younger asked for a vote on the two recommendations in the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee report.

She stated that after consulting with the Legislative Committee, it has been suggested that the proposal by the Federation of Multicultural Programs, Inc. be tabled until verification is received that no conflict of interest exists because two Community Board #16 members are involved with the organization.

On the second item involving Urban Strategies, she would like to entertain a motion to accept the recommendation.

A motion was made by Ms. Annie Walkes seconded by Ms. Sarah Hall and carried by a vote 20-for, 0-against, and 2-abstentions to table the proposal by the Federation of Multicultural Organizations for support of their proposal to house their Administrative offices and develop 56 apartments for the elderly on Block 3589, Lots 1, 6-10 and 48-50 until such time as it may be determined that doing so would not cause a conflict of interest.

A motion was made by Rev. Miran Ukaegbu, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku and unanimously carried to accept the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee's recommendation to support the proposal by Urban Strategies.

Ms. Annie Walkes, Chairperson of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee, reported that the Committee met on Wednesday, February 21, 2007 and discussed upcoming meetings and persons of interest to attend the meetings. Additionally, they discussed the possibility of visiting the Senior Citizen Centers located in Community District 16.

The Department for the Aging is sponsoring the Title V Senior Community Employment Program which is designed to give mature workers aged 55 years and older an opportunity to remain active and connected to society after retirement. It is a program to serve the Adult-Senior population in the City. Participants enrolled in the program receive a wage/stipend of \$7.15 an hour for 20 hours per week while involved in training with community assignments which can take place with other partner organizations Citywide. Two of the organizations in District 16 are the Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, located at 444 Thomas Boyland Street, and the Rosetta Gaston Senior Center, located at 460 Dumont Avenue.

The Christian Crossroad Ministry, Inc. Church is in the preliminary stage of planning a Senior Citizen Event that they would like the Committee to support. It is tentatively scheduled for the Memorial Day Weekend at their Church, located at 130 Watkins Street between Pitkin and Belmont Avenues. Tentative plans include a Saturday banquet as a tribute to seniors, a special service on Sunday, and a Monday barbeque. The Committee will be contacted and provided with more information as plans become more formulated.

Ms. Mack asked how can one get additional information concerning the Title V Senior Community Employment Program?

Ms. Walkes stated that one organization (Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation) is located in this building and is administered by Ms. Shirley Washington. She can be reached by calling (718) 498-4513.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku and carried to accept the report of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee.

Mr. David Alexander, member of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, February 20, and discussed issues of concern about the educational system and its impact on the education of our children.

The Committee also discussed sponsoring a youth forum during the month of June and will keep the community abreast of the plans.

The Committee is supporting Senator Velmanette Montgomery and Councilmember Darlene Mealy's Youth Hearing scheduled for Friday, March 9th, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at CAMBA Beacon IS 271, located at 1137 Herkimer Street. This Speak Out format is intended to give our youth an opportunity to state some of their concerns such as inadequate text books and summer youth employment. All youth are invited to attend this hearing and submit questions or issues of concern, prior to the event, to be considered for discussion during the hearing.

Please contact Deborah Moore at (718) 643-6410 at Senator Montgomery's Office, Essie Duggan at (718) 453-2610 at Wayside Baptist Church, or Debra Mack-Glasgow at (718) 345-5904 x222, CAMBA Beacon's Director, to submit questions or issues of concern.

Persons who have an interest in our youth are welcome to join the Youth Services Planning Committee.

A motion was made by Ms. Deborah Mack, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku and carried to accept the report of the Youth Service Planning Committee.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Essie Duggan, representing State Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

Ms. Duggan stated that Senator Montgomery encourages the community to participate in the upcoming youth forum which was mentioned earlier by Mr. Alexander. She especially encourages the youth to come out and tell the elected officials about their concerns. She is requesting that all the elected officials attend this forum in person so that they can hear the issues directly from our youth.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Tony Forman of Congressman Ed Towns' office.

Mr. Forman announced that the Congressman's office that was located on Pennsylvania Avenue has been relocated to 104-8 Flatlands Avenue between East 104 and East 105 Streets.

Many of you may have heard about the proposed sale of Starrett City. Congressman Towns, along with Senator Schumer, Attorney General Cuomo, and the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and others, are working to ensure that any sale of the property will maintain the affordability for the current tenants.

The Congressman has introduced a bill that will cause developers, especially developers of buildings where federal funding is being provided, to include larger and additional restrooms for women. This will eliminate the long lines often seen near the restrooms.

Ms. Gregory requested that the legislation also include facilities such as banking institutions that rarely have available restrooms for their clients.

Chairperson Younger recognized District Leader Lisa Kenner.

Ms. Kenner stated that as she mentioned last month, we need to be aware of the development that is occurring in our community. She does not see any commercial development to support all the

housing that is being developed.

In going around the community, she has discovered that there is a need for programs for the young men of the community. She is appealing to the men of the community to step up and run a men's program. Young men don't know how to be fathers because they have never been taught. She is calling on all of us to do our part to make this a better community.

Chairperson Younger recognized Deputy Inspector Jeffrey Maddrey of the 73rd Precinct.

Deputy Inspector Maddrey reported that in the Precinct, crimes increased by fifteen compared to the same period last year. Crimes that are up are burglaries, grand larcenies, and grand larceny autos. Burglaries are up mostly in the northern end of the Precinct and much of this is due to the men's shelter at 2402 Atlantic Avenue. It seems that some of the residents are breaking into unoccupied properties and removing the metal to sell to scrap yards. If you see someone pushing metal around in a cart, please report it to the Precinct. Most of the grand larcenies are due to identity theft, unauthorized use of credit card, and checking accounts.

The other type of grand larceny that is occurring is the snatching of personal property from pedestrians. We must remain aware of our surroundings - snatching takes place mostly because the person lets their guard down. They are beginning to see Nissan Maximas and Honda Accords being targeted for grand larceny auto. During a recent stretch of cold weather, three or four cars were stolen because the owners started their cars up and went back inside with the keys in them.

Mr. Marcus stated that sometimes the police use tactics that the youth feel violates them for no apparent reason. This creates a certain amount of rage and distrust of police amongst the youth. These are young people who are simply hanging out and talking to each other. Who can he reach to end this practice?

Deputy Inspector Maddrey stated that the subject is a complex one that cannot be simply answered in the allotted time. The Precinct is always trying to get involved with the youth. Two Fridays ago he met with a group of youth at Reverend Hamatheite's church, located at 90 Livonia Avenue, and a dialogue was had between the youth and the officers. They asked the youth to tell them their feelings about the police and the officers played different scenarios to show the youth their point of view. He learned a lot that evening. He asked Mr. Marcus to call him when he sees something like that happening and perhaps he may be able to explain the situation to him or investigate and get back to him.

Unfortunately, this is a community where policing has to take place. There were 22 people killed, 81 people shot, and 575 people robbed in the Precinct last year. Police work requires that some people are stopped and that some good kids are stopped as well. They needed to do this to remove 522 guns from the streets last year. One of his favorite questions to ask is if one of your friends had a gun would you tell? Often the answer is no. So the police are forced to do things the hard way.

Police Officer Dawn Townsend stated that 31 guns were removed from the streets year to date with 38 arrests. The GUNSTOP program continues to be in operation, which allows for persons who provide information leading to the arrest of another person with an illegal gun to collect a reward of \$1,000. It is important to note that the person needs to only be arrested in order that you be eligible for the reward.

The graffiti removal program is still in operation. Completed affidavits should be returned to the Community Affairs Office at the Precinct and as weather allows, teams will be dispatched to remove the graffiti.

They have been receiving many phone calls concerning ¾ homes. Persons are leasing their properties to organizations that are housing individuals returning from prison. Concern has been expressed that there are sexual offenders living at the homes, however, that is not the case. Anyone who has a problem with any of these homes should call her at (718) 495-5422.

The 73rd Precinct will be hosting their senior movie nights on Friday nights at the Rosetta Gaston Senior Center during the month of March and all are invited to join them.

Police Officer Gwendolyn Johnson announced that the Precinct is currently accepting applications for the Fresh Air Fund camps. Flyers are available on tonight s`distribution table.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Sandra Lloyd of Successful Start.

Ms. Lloyd stated that Successful Start is a free visiting nurse program for expecting and new parents. Their goal is to teach parenting skills and to educate against childhood neglect. She is here tonight to introduce herself and will return at a later date with additional information.

Chairperson Younger asked for moment of silent prayer in the memory of former District Manager Jeannette Gadson.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Sarah Hall and carried to adjourn the meeting.